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722-B East Queen Street  
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## MINUTES

The January 11, 2024, LFSWCD Board of Director's Meeting was held, in person, at the Strasburg Community Center Room; located at 726 East Queen Street, Strasburg, VA 22657.

Those attending were:

### LFSWCD Directors

Joan Comanor  
Mary Gessner  
James Fagan  
Justin Mackay-Smith  
Randy Buckley  
Emma Bricker  
Mark Huddleston  
Jack Owens

### Associate Directors

Jason Bushong  
Stephanie Shillingburg

### Cooperating Agency Representatives & Guests in Attendance:

Debbie Cross, CDC, DCR  
Brent Barriteau, NRCS  
Caty McVicker, Quail Forever

### LFSWCD Staff Members

Dana Gochenour  
Nick Livesay  
Sarah Fleming  
Madison Coffey  
Sam Shelton  
Sabrina Heltzel  
Ben Loyd

### Absent Directors or Staff:

Paul Burkholder  
Corey Childs  
Kermit Gaither  
Reid Hoak  
Ed Pendelton  
Ira Richards  
Allyson Ponn

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*LFSWCD Board Chairwoman Joan Comanor called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.*

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**Introduction of Guests:** Brent Barriteau introduced the newest member to the USAD office, Caty McVickers. She is a Biologist working with Quail Forever.



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**Chairman’s Report:**

- A warm welcome was given to the newly elected Board members in attendance.
- Each Director and Associate Director were presented with an updated Director Orientation Notebook.
- Discussion was had on Committee involvement.

**MOTION:** Board approval of the December 2023 minutes. **Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Justin Mackay-Smith. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** *\*Paul Burkholder, Corey Childs, Kermit Gaither, and Reid Hoak were absent at the time of vote.*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>		<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Joan Comanor	X				Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X				Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Emma Bricker	X				*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X				*Kermit Gaither			
*Corey Childs					Jack Owens	X		

**Treasurer’s Report: Stephanie Shillingburg**

- Stephanie reviewed her written report.

**MOTION:** to Accept and File for audit the Treasurer’s Report/Documents (as presented in the Board Packet). **Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Justin Mackay-Smith. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** *\*Paul Burkholder, Corey Childs, Kermit Gaither, and Reid Hoak were absent at the time of vote.*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>		<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Joan Comanor	X				Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X				Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Emma Bricker	X				*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X				*Kermit Gaither			
*Corey Childs					Jack Owens	X		

**Board Secretary/Administrative Specialist: Sarah Fleming**

- State Mileage Reimbursement rate has raised. Reminder to submit reimbursement request within 60 days of expense.

**Technical Staff Reports:**

**Supervising Conservation Specialist, Dana Gochenour:**

- Busy with Inspections and Trainings

**Senior Conservation Specialist, Nick Livesay:**

- Cold weather has given lead to office work and processing paperwork for payouts.



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**Conservation Specialist, Madison Coffey:**

- Preparing for maternity leave. Has spoken to fellow staff on what she will need covered while she is out.

**Conservation Specialist, Sabrina Heltzel**

- Colder weather has brought more in-house/office work.
- Updated Engineer packet
- Passed the 1<sup>st</sup> Exam for Professional Soil Scientist and now Nationally certified. Next is to become VA certified.

**Conservation Specialist, Ben Loyd**

- Busy helping other staff in the field and office.
- Has his first individual project in the works.

**Conservation Technical Assistant, Sam Shelton**

- Lots of VCAP interest and follow up.

**Education and Program Support Specialist, Allyson Ponn:**

- Allyson was participating in a Training event and was unable to attend.
- Dana gave a brief overview of Allyson's written report.
  - LFSWCD Envirothon to be held at Clairmont Farm, Berryville either April 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - March 21<sup>st</sup> Director Field Day Training
  - Cover Crops checks went great – only 1 field needs a re-visit.

**Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley: Joan Comanor**

Nothing to add to her written report.

**Conservation Easements Committee:**

- Discussion of Committees: the Conservation Easements Committee and Dam Safety Committee will be one committee moving forward. The Chair of the committee will be James Fagan

**Dam Safety Committee: James Fagan**

- As there are new members to committees there will be a Dam Safety & Conservation Easement Committee meeting scheduled in the near future to give an overview of the Dams the district is responsible for, Annual Inspections, Bi-annual State inspections, Dam Owners Association and our maintenance contract with Bryce Resort.
- Discussion was had on how the District became responsible for Dams.

**Conservation Technical Committee:**

- In Corey's absence, Mary Gessner reviewed the CTC report.
- Motions were as follows:



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**MOTION:** to recommend the Board approve the cancelation of contract 13-23-0008 SL-6W per the participant's request as presented at the 1/11/2024 Board Meeting. **Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Mark Huddleston. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Paul Burkholder, Corey Childs, Kermit Gaither, and Reid Hoak were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			*Paul Burkholder			
Emma Bricker	X			*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X			*Kermit Gaither			
*Corey Childs				Jack Owens	X		

**MOTION:** to recommend the Board approve SL-6W contracts 13-24-0022, 13-24-0075, 13-24-0072, 13-24-0008 and all associated conservation plans as presented at the 1/11/2024 Board Meeting. **Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Randy Buckley. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Paul Burkholder, Corey Childs, Kermit Gaither, and Reid Hoak were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			*Paul Burkholder			
Emma Bricker	X			*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X			*Kermit Gaither			
*Corey Childs				Jack Owens	X		

**MOTION:** to recommend the Board approve transferring 2024 CB VACS Funds to FR-1 contract 13-24-0068 for replanting due to an EAN as presented at the 1/11/2024 Board Meeting. **Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Justin Mackay-Smith. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Paul Burkholder, Corey Childs, Kermit Gaither, and Reid Hoak were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			*Paul Burkholder			
Emma Bricker	X			*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X			*Kermit Gaither			
*Corey Childs				Jack Owens	X		

**MOTION:** to recommend the Board approve SL-1 contracts 13-24-0010, 12-24-0071 and all associated conservation plans as presented at the 1/11/2024 Board Meeting. **Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Randy Buckley. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Paul Burkholder, Corey Childs, Kermit Gaither, and Reid Hoak were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			*Paul Burkholder			
Emma Bricker	X			*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X			*Kermit Gaither			
*Corey Childs				Jack Owens	X		



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**MOTION:** to recommend the Board approve SL-7 contracts 13-24-0072, 13-24-0073 and all associated conservation plans as presented at the 1/11/2024 Board Meeting. Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Justin Mackay-Smith. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*Paul Burkholder, Corey Childs, Kermit Gaither, and Reid Hoak were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			*Paul Burkholder			
Emma Bricker	X			*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X			*Kermit Gaither			
*Corey Childs				Jack Owens	X		

**MOTION:** to recommend the Board approve SL-6N contract 13-24-0022 and associated conservation plans as presented at the 1/11/2024 Board Meeting. Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Justin Mackay-Smith. Motion Passed.

Voting Ballot is as follows. \*Paul Burkholder, Corey Childs, Kermit Gaither, and Reid Hoak were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			*Paul Burkholder			
Emma Bricker	X			*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X			*Kermit Gaither			
*Corey Childs				Jack Owens	X		

**MOTION:** to recommend the Board approve SL-8B contract 13-24-0074 as presented at the 1/11/2024 Board Meeting.

Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Randy Buckley. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*Paul Burkholder, Corey Childs, Kermit Gaither, and Reid Hoak were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			*Paul Burkholder			
Emma Bricker	X			*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X			*Kermit Gaither			
*Corey Childs				Jack Owens	X		

**MOTION:** to recommend the Board approve an increase for SL-7 contract 13-24-0087 and associated tax credit as presented at the 1/11/2024 Board Meeting. Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Justin Mackay-Smith. Motion Passed.

Voting Ballot is as follows. \*Paul Burkholder, Corey Childs, Kermit Gaither, and Reid Hoak were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			*Paul Burkholder			
Emma Bricker	X			*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X			*Kermit Gaither			
*Corey Childs				Jack Owens	X		



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**Education and Information Committee: Joan Comanor**

- There will be a meeting on February 8, 2024, following the Board Meeting

**Finance Committee: Stephanie Shillingburg**

- There will be a meeting on February 8, 2024, at 9:00am prior to the Board Meeting

**Legislative Committee:**

- The General Assembly has reconvened
- Senator Timothy French has been appointed to the Ag Committee

**Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Committee:**

**Operations Committee: Justin MacKay-Smith**

- No new items to report.

**Personnel Committee: Joan Comanor**

- Mid-year staff reviews will take place February 6, 2024.

**Shenandoah County Water Resources Advisory Committee: Joan Comanor**

- Next meeting is February 7, 2024.

**Shenandoah Pure Water Forum: Mary Gessner**

- No new activity.

**Urban BMP Committee: Kermit Gaither**

- VCAP update given by Sam Shelton and Nick Livesay.

**Natural Resources Conservation Service: Brent Barriteau**

- Brent distributed 2 pieces of literature and gave an update on NRCS happenings.

**Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation: Debbie Cross**

- Debbie reviewed key items in her written report.
- March 13, 2024, Area I Spring Meeting
  - There will be a Director Orientation at the end of the session.
- VANATGE Conference February 7, 2024

**Virginia Cooperative Extension: Corey Childs**

- Absent.



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**Virginia Department of Forestry: Matt Wolanski**

- Not in attendance.

**Chesapeake Bay Foundation: Matt Kowalski**

- Not in attendance.

**Department of Environmental Quality: Sara Jordan**

- Not in attendance.

**Other:**

- Joan gave a brief review of the grant deliverable page in the board packet for the newest members.

**Adjournment:**

**MOTION: to Adjourn. Motion made by Justin Mackat-Smith, seconded by Emma Bricker. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** *\*Paul Burkholder, Corey Childs, Kermit Gaither, and Reid Hoak were absent at the time of vote.*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>		<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Joan Comanor	X				Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X				Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Emma Bricker	X				*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X				*Kermit Gaither			
*Corey Childs					Jack Owens	X		

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sarah R. Fleming*

Board Secretary

Board Approved Date: 2/8/2024